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The Shakerite

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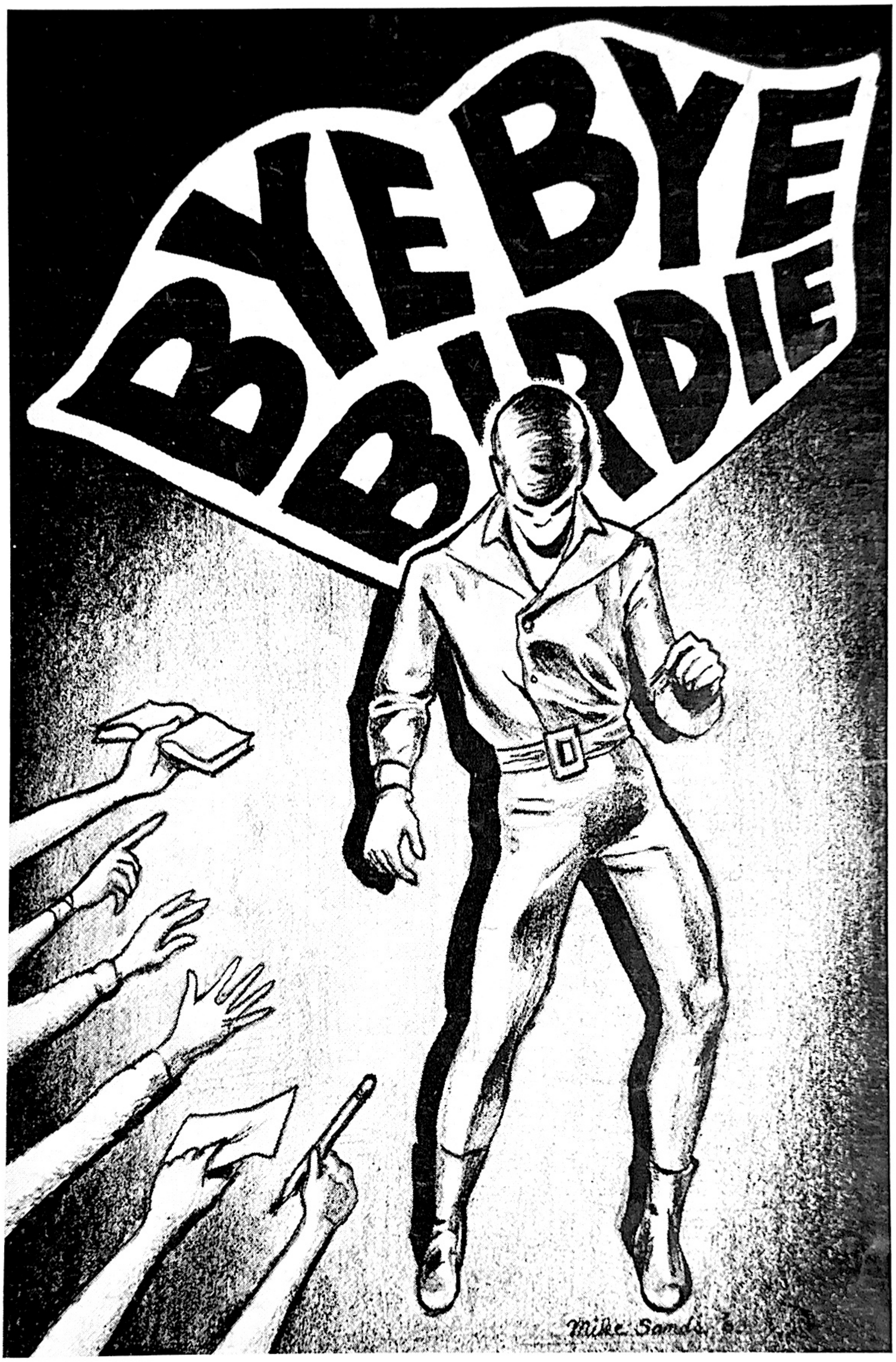


with

Steven Schwartz Kathryn Toth Katherine Sherman Thomas Osher

Directed by Reynold C. Ellis and John C. Barner

Four Leads Enjoy Their Roles; Parts Include Song and Dance

by Joan Bailey

"Basically, I move a lot," Tom Osher says of his part as Conrad Birdie, teen-age rock-and-roll idol, in "Bye Bye Birdie." Tom shares top billing in the musical with three others, Katie Sherman, who plays Kim, Kathy Toth, who plays Rose, and Steve Schwartz, who plays Albert.

Tom, who describes himself as "clean-cut, Ivy League," has grown long hair and sideburns for his part.

He enjoys playing Conrad and especially likes the 'I Love You Conrad" buttons. The part has one drawback, however. "The long hair is killing me!" he says.

Katie Sherman is the only one of the four leads who has had dancing lessons. However, her part as Kim, the small town girl chosen to kiss Conrad Birdie during his appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, requires no dancing.

Katie likes her role, and especially likes the songs she sings in it. She saw "Bye Bye Birdie" at Musicarnival last year but had no idea at the time that she would be playing Kim in the school production. She was "very surprised and thrilled" when she learned she had won the part.

The other leading lady, Kathy Toth, saw "Bye Bye Birdie" at Musicarnival and knew right then that she wanted to play Rose.

Her role, like Steve Schwartz's, requires dancing, and she and Steve have been working on their numbers under the watchful eyes of Mrs. Sharon Eichenbaum, sponsor of the modern dance club.

Song and Dance

Kathy and Steve do several dances and songs together in the show. "We had to start from scratch," she says, "but we're a lot better now!"

Steve likes the variety his role offers him. "With Ed Sullivan," he says, "Albert is a level-headed, shrewd businessman, but when he gets near his mother he's helpless, a six-foot tower of jello."

Handful Provides Music for 'Birdie'

The orchestration for "Bye Bye Birdie," music ranging from the jazz rhythms of "A Lot of Livin' To Do" to the pleasant bounce of "Rosie," will be provided by only a handful of musicians.

Scott Fields and Howard Jacobs, the A Cappella Choir's two regular accompanists, will be playing the two pianos in the orchestra pit during each performance.

Loren Selman on percussion and Jeff Fisher on double bass round out the orchestra for music throughout the show. Jef Lowell plays the electric guitar for "Honestly Sincere."

Kids Will Be Kids In Choral Comedy

by Susie Weisberger

A musical for kids, done by kids, and about kids is an unbeatable choice for the drama department's newest venture into the world of musical comedy.

"Bye Bye Birdie" differs from all the other musicals presented at Shaker in that the students are playing themselves in the play and enjoying it as much as do the people in the audience.

This is the newest and most modern musical given by Shaker and it deals with a theme heretofore avoided by the legitimate stage—the American teen-ager.

Lively Pace

It is characterized by its pep and vivacity; the pace never lags as the uncostumed, unpainted, and natural students sing and dance continuously.

There are no elaborate sets, and there are no real costumes, but these things are unnecessary in a musical which communicates so completely with the audience.

Drama Department Members To Assist Cast for Musical

A Cappella Choir members and Drama Department members will assist in the production of "Bye Bye Birdie," Shaker's biennial Broadway musical.

The A Cappella Choir and the entire production procedure is under the direction of Reynold Ellis, while the Drama Department will be supervised by John Barner.

Mr. Barner brought with him a new plan for the operation of the Drama Department. Under his plan, everyone in the Department has a specific job concerning some phase of the production other than performing.

Michael L o g s d o n, co-stage manager with Charles Smukler, said that this "educational theater" system has made production more efficient and has made possible the use of "the most complicated scenery ever." The scenery was designed entirely by the students.

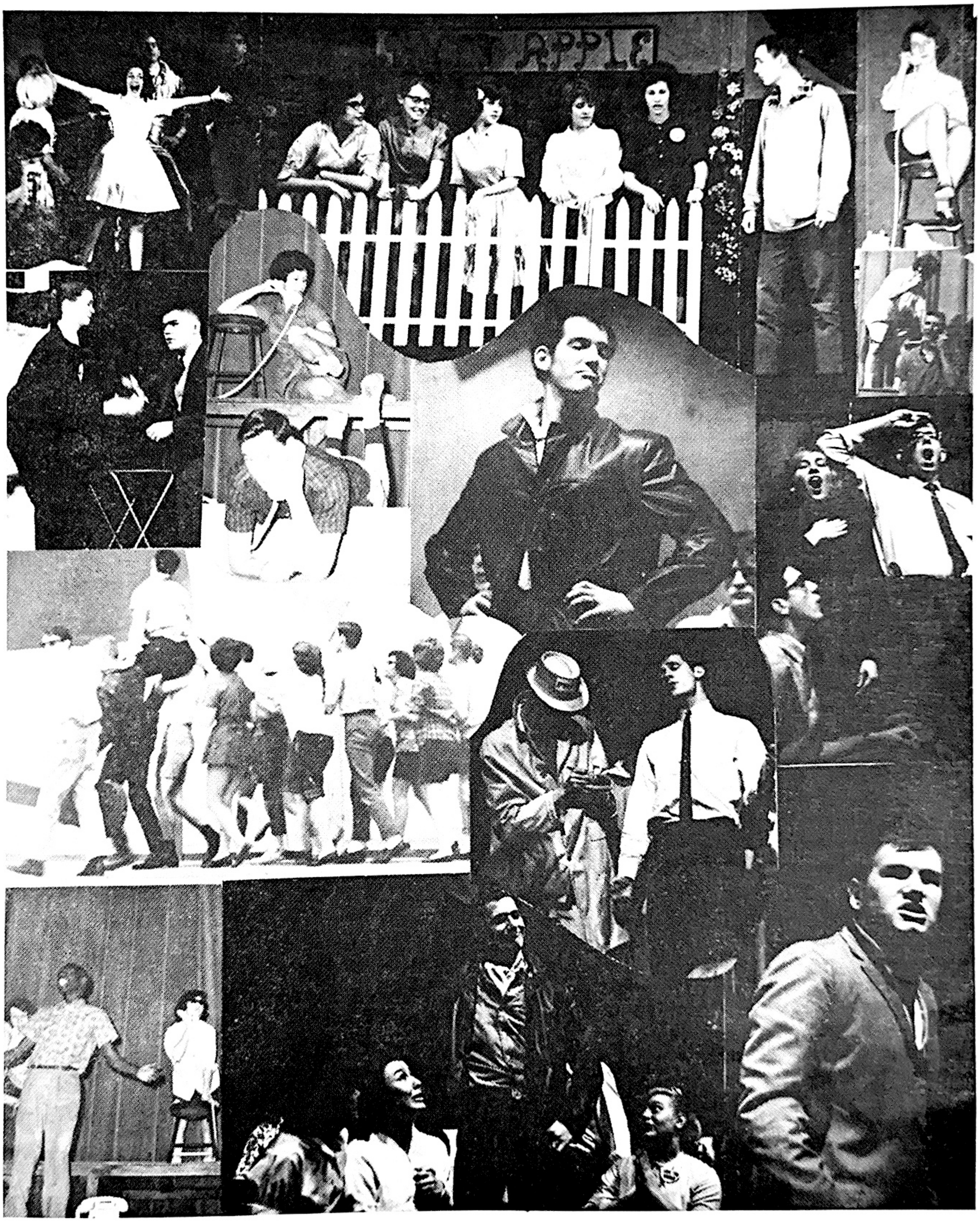
Highest Student Positions

Logsdon and Smukler hold the highest student positions in a long chain of command whose objectve is simply to put on this year's show, "Bye Bye Birdie." Directly under these two is Assistant Stage Manager Rod Jacobson.

Peter Bazeley and Marla Dill are in charge of props. Pam White is responsible for costumes. Any complaints about lighting go to Carl Armstrong. Robert Glick, as carpenter, is in charge of the building of all the props, and Robert Eckelson is sound crew head.

Swinging Sweet Apple:

Swinging Shaker Smash!



Birdie twitches, Mr. MacAfee retches, and the entire community of Sweet Apple, Ohio, goes stark, raving mad in the A Cappella Choir production of the long-running Broadway hit, "Bye Bye Birdie."

'Birdie's' Directors Acclaim "Shaker's Greatest Musical"

by Abby Lodish

The success of this year's musical, "Bye Bye Birdie," is greatly dependent upon the directors in charge of the production. This year's performance will reflect the work of a highly qualified staff, Reynold Ellis, musical director, John Barner, director of the play, and Miss Patricia Young, technical director.

Mr. Ellis is a veteran in the field of music and has been displaying his talents at Shaker for many years.

In addition to his work with the various musical organizations at Shaker, Mr. Ellis directs the Hope Church Choir as well as a variety of adult amateur groups, one of which is Music Theatre Inc.

"Birdie" Best Yet

Mr. Ellis has lent his talent and knowledge to every Shaker musical and is now working his hardest to make this year's production, Shaker's sixth, the best yet.

He decided to use "Bye Bye Birdie" after seeing the Broadway performance two years ago. He immediately perceived that, because of the story and huge cast involved, the play would be a natural for a high school performance.

This year's choir-drama production is the first one for Mr. Barner, who entered Shaker as a speech teacher and as the head of the drama department last fall.

He has had extensive training and experience in the field of dramatics. He has been director, producer, and business manager for Harmonie Associates, Inc.

He has produced a local television series and been chairman and director of the American Educational Theater Association, Inc. In addition, he is a member of the Speech Association of America and a life member of the National Educational Association.

Young's First

When commenting on the production, Mr. Barner remarked, "Of all the high schools that are doing 'Bye Bye Birdie,' Shaker is the only school that has the right. It satirizes the Elvis Presley, leather-coat image. Since Shaker, the best of all the schools, has no motorcycle rider, it is able to satirize them. In other schools it is too close to home. They can not satirize what they are."

"Bye Bye Birdie" is Miss Young's first production at Shaker. She entered Shaker during the second semester of this year as an English teacher.

Miss Young, a graduate of Indiana University, acted in summer stock for five years and has directed and acted in sixty productions. This past summer she worked at Cape Cod in such plays as "King of Hearts," "Skin of Our Teeth," "Seven Year Itch," and "Little Foxes."

Miss Young's work in "Bye Bye Birdie" is especially difficult because she is working with the most intricate scenery ever used at Shaker. There are twelve sets and fifteen scene changes.

The costuming and props are contemporary and fairly standard, but the scenery is very unrealistic—flat, abstract, and extremely colorful.

Publicity Work Complex Task

Publicity for "Bye Bye Birdie" was under the direction of Lucy Hoffman, who is chairman of the Publicity Committee of A Cappella Choir.

The committee, with the aid of Reynold Ellis, Miss Patricia Young, and John Barner, worked out the all-important details concerning publicity for the show.

The publicity work had many facets. Not only is the show the original uncut version, but the posters are also printed in New York in the original design used for the show. Pins with "I Love You Conrad" on them were available through any choir member.

P.A. Announcements

Besides P.A. announcements and posters, the committee is also advertising through both junior high schools and all the elementary schools. The students there were urged to come to the dress rehearsal at 4:00 p.m. on Thursdayfi, May 2.

Skits from the show were used for publicity purposes, too. A skit was presented for the Parent's Music Committee Thursday, April 18, and on Saturday, April 27, at the Executive Club for the Lomond PTA Teacher Appreciation Luncheon.

Show's Costumes, Sets Present Few Problems

The most unusual thing about the costumes and props for Shaker's production of "Bye Bye Birdie" is that they are very usual! Because the play takes place in a small Ohio town and the characters are modern high school students, the cast had little trouble in finding appropriate costumes.

Some costumes are ordinary suits, while others are everyday school clothes. Tom Osher, who plays Conrad Birdie, will wear the one unusual costume in the musical, an eye-dazzling gold lame suit.

The props for the play were also easily obtained. Although there are twelve different sets, many of the props are such common items as telephones, water glasses, and pitchers.

The prop crew built the sets for "Bye Bye Birdie" from scratch. Backdrops swing down to represent the town of Sweet Apple, Ohio, and Penn Station. Instead of the elaborate pigeonhole construction used in the Broadway version of the Telephone Hour sketch, risers and a platform will be used. Projections of the streets of Sweet Apple will flash on the side walls of the auditorium.